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Matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the IPF process

Underlying causes of deforestation; traditional forest-related knowledge; forest conservation and protected areas; and research priorities

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

The present note by the Secretariat is prepared as a supporting document to a background discussion on underlying causes of deforestation; traditional forest-related knowledge; forest conservation and protected areas; and research priorities as a part of Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) programme element II.d of the programme of work set out in the report of IFF on its first session (E/CN.17/IFF/1997/4). This note reviews some of the major issues, key to the topics under consideration, and summarizes some of the main conclusions discussed; proposes a process to prepare a background document as a basis for the report of the Secretary-General; and notes other events preparatory to the substantive discussion scheduled for the third session, including a global workshop on the international underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation and their relationship to national underlying causes, and an international expert consultation on "Research and information systems in forestry". It takes note of the outcome of the third and fourth meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity related to traditional forest-related knowledge, and to forest conservation and protected areas.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present note by the Secretariat is prepared as a supporting document to a background discussion on underlying causes of deforestation; traditional forest-related knowledge; forest conservation and protected areas; and research priorities as a part of category II.d of the programme of work set out in the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) on its first session (E/CN.17/IFF/1997/4). At its first session, IFF emphasized the need to build on the positive results achieved by the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) of the Commission on Sustainable Development and to consider matters left pending as well as other issues arising from the programme elements of the IPF process. This note therefore recalls the conclusions and proposals for action relevant to the above issues as contained in the final report of IPF (E/CN.17/1997/12). This note also reviews some of the major issues, key to the topics under consideration, and summarizes some of the main conclusions discussed. The note proposes a process for preparing a background document as a basis for the report of the Secretary-General and also notes other events preparatory to the substantive discussion scheduled for the third session.

2. Although the four topics under consideration in this note are interrelated, the note will treat them separately and, owing to the restrictions on the maximum length of official United Nations Secretariat documentation, each of the topics will be treated in a summary fashion.

MANDATE

3. Category II of the IFF's programme of work mandates the consideration of "matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the IPF process".

4. The section of the mandate stipulating the work under IFF programme element II.d, concerning the topics of this note, states: "(d) Consider, inter alia, ... analysis of underlying causes, in particular international causes, including transboundary economic forces of deforestation and forest degradation, taking into account the historical perspective and the pressures exerted on forests by other sectors, notably agriculture, in the quest for food security; traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK), consistent with, inter alia, the terms of the Convention on Biological Diversity;[1] ... identification and definition of global and regional research priorities, taking into account national priorities."

5. All of the above issues will receive substantive discussion by IFF at its third session.

II.d (1): Underlying causes of deforestation

Introduction

6. IPF noted, inter alia, "the critical need to understand the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, which are often country-specific. A focused approach is needed that concentrates on reversing the most damaging processes and promoting the most effective and beneficial measures. It is also important to recognize local initiatives that could counter current trends in deforestation and forest degradation, especially among indigenous and local communities".

7. The Panel also noted that "it is important to consider historical dimensions and to learn from experience. Many of the factors causing deforestation or forest degradation interact, and some are synergistic. Most causes are social and economic in character. Although some courses of action, such as unsustainable timber extraction, are linked to the forest sector itself, inappropriate policy choices and approaches in other sectors can also influence deforestation and forest degradation". The Panel noted a number of potential underlying causes, including production and consumption patterns, land tenure patterns, land speculation and land markets, illegal logging, illegal land occupation and illegal cultivation, grazing pressures, unsustainable agriculture, the demand for fuelwood and charcoal to meet basic energy needs, refugee-related problems, mining and oil exploitation, natural climatic events and forest fires, discriminatory international trade and trade distorting practices, poorly regulated investment, structural adjustment programmes, external debt, market distortions and subsidies, including those for agricultural commodities, poverty and demographic pressure.

8. In terms of underlying causes, the IPF proposals for action urged all countries, with the support of international organizations and the participation of major groups, to take, inter alia, the following significant steps:

(a) Case studies (proposal for action 31 (a)): "to undertake case studies using the diagnostic framework ... in order to identify (the most important) underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation; develop and test the usefulness of the framework as an analytical tool in assessing options for utilization of forest and forest lands"; and "refine it, disseminate the results and apply it more widely as appropriate";

(b) In-depth studies (proposals for action 27 (a) and (b)): "to prepare in-depth studies of the underlying causes at the national and international levels of deforestation and forest degradation; to analyse comprehensively the historical perspective of the causes of deforestation and forest degradation in the world, and other international underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, including transboundary economic forces";

(c) Global workshop (proposal for action 28 (c)): "to support the convening, as soon as possible, of a global workshop on the international underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation and their relationship to national underlying causes";

(d) Land tenure and benefit-sharing (proposal for action 29 (c)): "to formulate policies aiming at securing land tenure for local communities and indigenous people, including policies, as appropriate, aimed at the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of forests";

(e) National strategies (proposals for action 29 (a) and (b)): "to formulate and implement national strategies, through an open and participatory process, for addressing the underlying causes of deforestation and, if appropriate, to define policy goals for national forest cover as inputs to the implementation of national forest programmes" and "to develop mechanisms, such as environmental impact assessments, to improve policy formulation and coordination, through an open and participatory process".

9. A special note on forest fires: Among several other underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, illegal logging, combined with land clearing for shifting cultivation, has been indicated as greatly increasing the incidence of forest fires around the world. These land-use activities replace the tall, dense, naturally fire-resistant forests with agricultural lands and degraded forests that are highly flammable. During the prolonged drought of the past season which affected half of Amazonia, and vast forest areas in Indonesia, Central America and Mexico, many of these flammable ecosystems burned. When seasonal drought is very severe, such as during the El Niño event of 1997-1998, even virgin forests become more vulnerable to the ravages of fire. Unfortunately, as a result of mismanagement, land-use changes and malpractices, many natural forests ecosystems are also losing their natural capacity to protect themselves from fires. This issue will be analysed as an important factor among the underlying causes of deforestation in the report to be prepared for the third session of IFF.

Implementation of the proposals for action on underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation

10. At the nineteenth session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 27 January-7 February 1997, the Governing Council, by decision 19/22[2] on the Environment Fund budgets, approved the revised proposals for 1996-1997 and proposals for 1998-1999 which included activities for follow up to the work of IPF. IFF programme element II.d: underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation is reflected in Fund subprogramme 1.2 entitled "Caring for biological resources" as one of the priority activities. It is envisaged that a report entitled In-depth Analysis of Underlying Causes and their Regional Variances of Deforestation and Forest Degradation; Strategic and Policy Options to Address the Underlying Causes of Deforestation and Forest Degradation will be presented by UNEP to the third session of IFF to support substantive discussion by the Forum on this topic. The report will be based on:

(a) Contributions by countries concerning national and international underlying causes affecting them;

(b) Comprehensive analysis of the historical perspective of the causes of deforestation and forest degradation in the world and other international

underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, including transboundary economic forces.

11. At the first session of IFF, the particular interest of non-governmental organizations in contributing to the IFF deliberations on underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation was welcomed by the Panel. At one of the plenary meetings, a group of 20 non-governmental organizations presented a joint statement expressing their willingness to contribute to a joint initiative on national and international underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation. The non-governmental organizations' statement included the following:

(a) An offer to organize, in partnership with Governments, a global workshop on national and international underlying causes referenced above. The statement invited Governments and international agencies to join non-governmental organizations as partners in organizing this workshop, and suggested the workshop could include:

(i) Presentations by Governments of their case studies using the diagnostic framework proposed by IPF, with a focus on problem-solving and solution-oriented approaches to address underlying causes;

(ii) Presentations by non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples on relevant reports and case studies on underlying causes;

(b) A proposal that the workshop organizers would prepare a synthesis report of the results, focused on solution-oriented approaches, and that this report would be available to IFF as one of the documents on the progress being made in implementing the IPF proposals for action on underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

12. The non-governmental organization process is coordinated by an organizing committee of which UNEP is a member. The coordination of this process will be carried out through the work of two committees, an organizing committee and a steering committee, each composed of representatives of the Government of Costa Rica, UNEP, non-governmental organization representatives from seven geographical regions and a representative of an international indigenous people's organization. A number of Governments, including those of Australia, Finland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, have indicated willingness to make financial contributions.

13. In its adopted work programme on forest biological diversity (decision IV/7), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its fourth meeting (Bratislava, May 1998), recognized the importance of further research on analysing measures related to the underlying causes of loss of forest biological diversity. Besides unsustainable forest management practices, there are other causes associated with the loss of forest biological diversity in forest ecosystems. These include habitat transformation, harmful alien species, pollution, erosion, uncontrolled forest fires and poverty. There is a need for a better understanding of the underlying social, cultural and economic causes of forest biological diversity loss, and for the enhancement of measures for mitigating the impact of these causes.

Preparations for substantive discussion

14. The conclusions of the global workshop will be reflected in the report of the Secretary-General for the third session of IFF, to be prepared by UNEP. Countries, international and regional organizations, indigenous people's organizations and non-governmental organizations will be invited to contribute actively to the preparation of this report by submitting relevant inputs and information on case studies to the lead agency. All interested parties will be encouraged to participate in the global workshop.

II.d (2): Traditional forest-related knowledge

Mandate

15. II.d: "Consider other issues arising from the programme elements of the IPF process needing further clarification. Consider, inter alia, ... traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK), consistent with, inter alia, the terms of the Convention on Biological Diversity."

Major issues

16. The major issues on TFRK were recognized by the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bratislava, Slovakia, May 1998, as follows:

17. In its decision IV/7, the Conference of the Parties adopted a programme of work on forest biological diversity, aiming, inter alia, to identify traditional forest systems of conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity and to promote the wider use and role of TFRK in sustainable forest management and the equitable sharing of benefits, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

18. In its decision IV/9, the Conference of the Parties established an ad hoc open-ended inter-sessional working group on the implementation of article 8 (j) and related provisions to, inter alia, provide advice as a priority on the application and development of legal and other appropriate forms of protection for the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

19. In its decision IV/8, on matters related to benefit-sharing, the Conference of the Parties established a panel of experts appointed by Governments, composed of representatives from the private and the public sectors as well as representatives of indigenous and local communities. The mandate of this panel would be to draw upon all relevant sources, including legislative, policy and administrative measures, best practices and case studies on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing arising from the use of those genetic resources. In this decision, the Conference of the Parties also requested the financial mechanism of the Convention to give special emphasis to the programme priorities for funding initiatives by eligible parties, such as, inter alia, within biodiversity projects, other specific benefit-sharing initiatives, such as

support for entrepreneurial developments by local and indigenous communities, facilitation of financial sustainability of projects promoting the sustainable use of genetic resources, and appropriate targeted research components.

20. In its decision IV/15, on the relationship of the Convention with the Commission on Sustainable Development and biodiversity-related conventions, other international agreements, institutions and processes of relevance, the Conference of the Parties emphasized that further work was required to help develop a common appreciation of the relationship between provisions of the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, including Trade in Counterfeit Goods[3] and the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular on issues relating to technology transfer and conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources, including the protection of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

21. Furthermore, in its decision IV/9, the Conference of the Parties invited the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to take into account in its work the lifestyles and the traditional systems of access to and use of the knowledge, technologies and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and the relevant recommendations of the Conference of the Parties. It further requested the Executive Secretary of the Convention to seek ways, including the possibility of negotiating a memorandum of understanding with WIPO, to enhance cooperation between the Convention and WIPO on issues arising from article 8 (j) of the Convention and related provisions.

22. In the forthcoming years, major outcomes of the implementation of these decisions would include:

(a) Analysis of human impacts on forest ecosystems, enhanced ability to prioritize research needs and to apply results, and better understanding of the role of traditional knowledge in ecosystem management so as to minimize or mitigate negative influences, and promote the positive effects;

(b) Expansion of research capacity to develop and assess options incorporating the applications of traditional knowledge so as to minimize or mitigate negative influences, and promote the positive effects;

(c) A better understanding of the ecosystem approach as it relates to conservation and utilization of forest biological diversity, and an elaboration of the linkages to other work under the Convention, including the incorporation of article 8 (j).

Proposed process of preparation for substantive discussions at the third session of IFF

23. In accordance with decision IV/7 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in the period between the second and third sessions of IFF, the Executive Secretary of the Convention, in implementing the

work programme on forest biological diversity, will actively continue collaboration and cooperation with the IFF secretariat and relevant institutions. In this regard, the Executive Secretary of the Convention is requested to transmit decision IV/7 of the Conference of the Parties to IFF at its second session. The key activities that will contribute to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General for the third session of IFF are the following:

(a) Identification of traditional forest systems of conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity and promotion of the wider application, use and role of TFRK in sustainable forest management and the equitable sharing of benefits, in accordance with article 8 (j) and other related provisions of the Convention;

(b) Promotion of research on TFRK, with the full involvement of its holders, and advancing of a wider understanding and use of the knowledge gained;

(c) Implementation of requests to the financial mechanism of the Convention to consider the operational objectives of the programme of work on forest biological diversity as constituting guidance for funding in the field of forest biological diversity and strong encouragement of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to assist in the implementation of the programme of work at the national, regional and subregional levels.

24. In the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General for the third session of IFF, appropriate use will be made of the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group on article 8 (j), established by decision IV/9 of the Conference of the Parties, and other relevant activities established under other United Nations bodies, international agencies, organizations, Governments and major groups, in particular with regard to TFRK.

25. As outlined in decision IV/8 on access and benefit-sharing of the Conference of the Parties, the inter-sessional open-ended meeting of the Conference of the Parties will explore options for access and benefit-sharing mechanisms and will start work on developing a common appreciation of the relationships among intellectual property rights, including the protection of knowledge, innovation and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and will make recommendations for future work. Moreover, the panel of experts appointed by Governments, to be set up by the Conference of the Parties, will explore all options for access and benefit-sharing on mutually agreed terms, including guiding principles, guidelines and codes of best practice for access and benefit-sharing arrangements.

26. In its decision IV/9, the Conference of the Parties further requested that case studies on intellectual property rights, including existing sui generis systems and/or adapted forms of protection of the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, be compiled by the Executive Secretary of the Convention, for transmittal to WIPO and for use in initiatives on legislating on the implementation of article 8 (j) and related provisions of the Convention.

II.d (3): Forest conservation and protected areas

Introduction

27. The Convention on Biological Diversity states (preamble) that "the fundamental requirement for the conservation of biological diversity is the in situ conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings". In situ conservation (article 8) is complemented by ex situ conservation (article 9).

28. In its decision III/12, concerning the programme of work for terrestrial biological diversity: forest biological diversity, the Conference of the Parties recommended to the IPF, inter alia, that strategies for sustainable forest management should be based on an ecosystem approach, which would integrate conservation measures (for example, protected areas) and sustainable use of biological diversity.

29. The Conference of the Parties, at its third meeting, inter alia, also identified the following research and technological priorities: the assessment of ecological landscape models, the integration of protected areas in the ecosystems approach to sustainable forest management, and the representativeness and adequacy of protected areas networks.

30. In its decision IV/I on the ecosystem approach, the Conference of the Parties acknowledged the need for a workable description and further elaboration of the ecosystem approach.

31. The Conference of the Parties invites parties to address the issue of alien species as regards the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and to incorporate activities related thereto into their national strategies, programmes and action plans.

32. In its decision IV/7, in which it adopted the work programme on forest biological diversity, the Conference of the Parties identified as one main objective to identify the contribution of networks of protected areas to the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity.

Background

33. The proposals for action related to forest conservation adopted by IPF and reflected in its final report (E/CN.17/1997/12) are reflected in several IPF programme elements as shown below:

34. Paragraph 40 (b): The Panel invited countries and relevant international organizations, especially the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to collaborate with indigenous people and forest-dependent people who possess TFRK to promote an internationally acceptable understanding of TFRK, and to identify, respect, preserve and maintain TFRK, including innovations and practices that are relevant for the conservation of forest biological diversity and the sustainable use of forest biological resources.

35. Paragraph 44: Protected areas need to be established and supported, where appropriate, in fragile and endangered ecosystems affected by drought and desertification, as part of in situ conservation strategies.

36. Paragraph 46 (c): The Panel urged countries to establish protected areas to safeguard forest and related ecosystems, their water supplies, and historical and traditional uses in appropriate localities in areas affected by drought, particularly in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions.

37. Paragraph 58 (b): The Panel urged countries with low forest cover: (v) to establish or expand networks of protected areas, buffer zones and ecological corridors, where possible, in order to conserve biodiversity, particularly in unique types of forests, working in close liaison with the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international environmental agreements.

38. The Government of Australia has announced its willingness to sponsor an in-depth study on protected areas in support of the work programme of IFF.

Major issues for discussion at the third session of IFF

39. Recommendations from the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to IPF constitute the main issues. The impact of deforestation and forest degradation are in the form of soil erosion, loss of biological diversity, deterioration of the quality of life and reduction of the options for development.

40. The present situation calls for urgent and consistent action for forest conservation and conservation in protected areas. Areas should be selected and managed so that maximum biological diversity is preserved.

41. An important component identified at the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in the work programme of the Conference of the Parties on forest biological diversity (decision IV/7) relates to further research on assessing ecological landscape models, the integration of protected areas in the ecosystem approach to sustainable forest management and the representativeness and adequacy of protected area networks. Conservation of forest biological diversity should be carried out both by establishing protected areas and by taking into account plantation forests. The outcome of this programme of the Convention will also include further development of methods to integrate protected areas in sustainable forest management, as well as to reduce gaps in knowledge in the areas of fragmentation of habitats and population viability, and include mitigation options such as ecological corridors and buffer zones.

Proposed topics to be included in the report of the Secretary-General for discussion at the third session of IFF

42. The Forum may wish to consider:

(a) Approaches and mechanisms towards the establishment of a system of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity;

(b) Development, where necessary, of guidelines for the selection, establishment and management of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity;

(c) Regulation or management of biological resources important for the conservation of biological diversity whether within or outside protected areas, with a view to ensuring their conservation and sustainable use;

(d) Definition of protected areas in terms of their aim, size and approaches to management.

II.d (4): Research priorities

Introduction

43. The International Workshop on Integrated Application of Sustainable Forest Management Practices (Kochi, Japan, November 1996) (see document E/CN.17/IPF/1997/9) concluded, inter alia, with the following proposals for action:

44. A new culture on land-use planning and forest research and extension recognizes and accepts that integration of a wide variety of environmental, social and economic values, needs and aspirations is essential to achieve sustainable forest management practices ... recognizes the linkages between the field level and the international level ... involves institutional changes and linkages including new mechanisms for decision-making ... Research in this new culture is stakeholder-driven, focused and practical. Planning is iterative between planning levels and evolutionary over time; it results in implementation of planning decisions. The products of this emerging culture will be a new generation of applied research and its inclusion in all levels of planning processes is an important supportive tool necessary for achieving sustainable forest management.

45. Subsequently, the report of the IPF Co-Chairs also called for "measures to focus and improve coordination of forest research and development, possibly through the development of a strategic framework for a global forest research network, making full use of existing organizations".

46. In response, the Governments of Indonesia and Austria, assisted by the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), have organized an international expert consultation

on "Research and information systems in forestry" to be held in Austria from 4 to 11 September. The Forestry Research Support Programme for the Asia and Pacific Region (FORSPA) organized an International Seminar on "Emerging institutional arrangements for forestry research", assisted by FAO, IUFRO and CIFOR in December 1997 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

IPF proposals for action

47. The first session of IFF recognized eight issues arising from the IPF process and needing further clarification, namely (a) underlying causes of deforestation; (b) traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK); (c) assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation of forest cover; (d) forest conservation; (e) research priorities; (f) valuation of forest goods and services; (g) economic instruments, tax policies and land tenure; and (h) supply and demand of wood and non-wood forest products and services.

48. While the above configuration implies that "research and research priorities" constitute a distinct and separate topic, an alternative perspective is that the IPF and IFF processes have identified the great number of crucial gaps in existing information and knowledge (as regards the other seven outstanding items listed in the preceding paragraph). In respect of each of these, enhanced information gathering and analysis (in other words, research) are urgently required, in order that better-informed decisions may be made and forest management at the local, national and global levels improved. "Research" should not be considered an object of discussion per se, but rather the crucial means whereby science can enhance and advance discussions on all other outstanding issues, especially when its focus is on the real needs of clients who participate in and contribute to the research.

49. It is now widely agreed that some new research-coordinating mechanisms are necessary to strengthen both the individual scientific units and the linkages between them and to enable a "worldwide web of forest researchers" to function effectively. These research coordinating mechanisms and networks need to be closely linked with real-world forest management problems. Ideally, an international framework for interdisciplinary research collaboration would:

(a) Provide a support mechanism for scientists from developing countries;

(b) Promote comparative and widely applicable analysis;

(c) Allow a division of labour to maximize efficiency and minimize wasteful duplication;

(d) Enable scientists from different disciplines to interact constructively;

(e) Ensure the critical mass of effort needed to make important breakthroughs;

(f) Facilitate research in practical ways, by improving accessibility of large global data sets used by researchers in individual countries;

(g) Provide a focus for priority strategic research questions identified in close collaboration with clients;

(h) Serve as a vehicle to guide allocation of funds;

(i) Provide access to existing information including databases, compendia and other value-added information products;

(j) Provide a "bulletin board" to promote rapid electronic communication.

50. Many of these functions are currently performed through the activities of IUFRO, CIFOR and FAO. These three (different but complementary) organizations have highlighted the need for:

(a) Recognition of the need for a forest research agenda greater than, and qualitatively different from, the one that existed in the past, which was national or local in scope and oriented mainly towards industrial timber production;

(b) Strengthening of mechanisms to enable research communities to contribute adequately to the seeking of solutions to those researchable problems identified in forums such as IFF;

(c) Dismantling of financial and institutional impediments to effective and enhanced cooperation, whether these occur at the national or the international level.

51. Furthermore, IUFRO, CIFOR and FAO proposed that:

(a) They needed to work with other international forestry and environmental research institutions to facilitate such coordination and develop a strategic framework for global forest research;

(b) The international community (especially those in charge of official development assistance (ODA)) should recognize the need for this new, improved international coordination mechanism, whose objectives also include capacity-building and strengthening of national and regional research systems, and consider how the forest research community, funding agencies and research users could harmonize strategies, ensure adequate resources for research and disseminate results;

(c) The Commission on Sustainable Development recognizes the opportunities for improved forest science to be addressed in IFF and the need for a "strategic framework for global forest research".

Major issues

52. Forums such as IFF and policy and decision makers at the national and regional levels need access to unbiased sources of authoritative information, and objective analyses of the technical and scientific options. This is essential not only for formulating the possible path forwards, but even for clarifying the sources of existing weaknesses in knowledge and understanding,

and setting the agenda for both research and policy action. Improved quality of, and access to, scientifically sound information and research are an integral part of consensus-building around the need for action, and the direction of future international action on forests. Yet there are still frequent disagreements about basic information on forest areas, rates of change, management options, underlying causes of deforestation and so on, as well as about, inter alia, the future role of plantations, the potential for rehabilitation of degraded or non-forested lands, and traditional forest-related knowledge. Here lies an opportunity to identify the most important information gaps that must be filled, in order to analyse more succinctly the current state of the world's forests, and their use, management and conservation, and, then, what still needs to be done to improve the situation.

53. A longer-term goal would be to assist in laying out the architecture of an international institutional framework that will continue to support research aimed at resolution of high-priority problems facing international (in other words, global and regional) forestry and forests, and at capturing new opportunities; that is to say, the goal would be to try to ensure that, in the post-IFF international institutional framework, the need for and the potential role of research are explicitly recognized and adequately supported. Another important goal is to enhance the capability of forest researchers in developing countries to diagnose and solve their existing and yet-to-emerge forestry problems. New international institutional arrangements for forests need to include a detailed and well-conceived mechanism elaborated towards the goal of strengthening national capability, as well as better cooperation, priority-setting and mechanisms at the regional and global levels.

54. A new mechanism for priority-setting might help to achieve the proposed renewal and redefinition in forest science. The work plan for a new international network should be modelled on the research agenda presented and discussed at IPF. There is a need to undertake systematic review of the state of knowledge in particular areas, and synthesize the results so as to produce a comprehensive report that also identifies gaps to be filled by further interdisciplinary research, or specially commissioned short-term collaborative research projects, combined with long-term research initiatives in selected areas. All this presumes a mechanism to disburse international funds to support the high-priority collaborative research activities. It is imperative that the eventual clients of forest research have involvement in not only the identification of research topics but also the conduct of the ensuing research activities.

55. Developing a new mechanism (strategy/initiative) for global or eco-regional interdisciplinary forest research should incorporate and integrate:

(a) A "clearing house" that guides the identification, definition and prioritization of interdisciplinary research problems and evaluates the results of research addressing them;

(b) Research institutes, consortia or networks that lead and organize the research and ensure that the results are made available to users;

(c) A body that assists with capacity-building and dissemination of results.

56. These should be seen, however, as interdependent and integrated rather than independent functions, and each of them should be undertaken with the active involvement of appropriate national institutions.

Proposed process of preparation for substantive discussion at the third session of IFF

57. After the proposal made to IFF by Austria and Indonesia to hold a meeting of experts was presented at the first session of IFF, initial preparations for a response to the mandate from IFF were held during the World Forestry Congress in Turkey, October 1997. Subsequently, a Steering Committee meeting was held on 27 and 28 November 1997, at the Federal Forest Research Centre, Vienna, Austria. The meeting discussed possible objectives and outputs for an expert meeting, including, among others:

(a) Review of priorities for global, regional and even national researchable issues;

(b) Capacity-building in research institutions;

(c) Establishment of centres of excellence and structures for collaborative research;

(d) Ways of changing research culture (follow-up to the Kochi meeting);

(e) Ways of making research attractive for donors, and policy and decision makers;

(f) Regional and global forest data information systems;

(g) Networking and compilation of forest research data;

(h) Environment issues (biotic, abiotic, anthropogenic).

58. Proposed topics for some of the background papers and keynote addresses also include (a) "geographical information"; (b) sample plot data; (c) literature review of value-added information; and (d) cost-benefit analysis of previous research investments.

59. The participants at the expert meeting will include leading researchers, opinion leaders in science policy, "institutional" experts, the World Bank, United Nations organizations, major foundations, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources-World Conservation Union (IUCN) and other non-governmental organizations, providing for an overall equitable North-South and gender distribution.

60. The new broad international concern of societies about forest issues requires a re-examination of forest research institutions. Is the culture of forest research already changing or is there a need for new initiatives to

create a new culture? What types of new approaches and new alliances are needed now and for the future? The Austria-Indonesia initiative will place more emphasis on how research gets done and less on what gets done but the meeting will not produce a "shopping list of worthy research topics". It is therefore intended to resemble more a brainstorming and consensus-building meeting than a planning session to list priority research areas.

61. The desired overall outcome of the Austria-Indonesia initiative is to prepare options for the third session of IFF as regards a new, effective mechanism for better priority-setting, conduct, application and funding of international forest research, recognizing the need for more, better and different forest research to solve the "forest problems and dilemmas" recognized by IPF. The meeting aims to design a mechanism that can consistently present the donors with "investment opportunities" in focused research that will have high impacts on forest developmental programmes.

62. The specific output from the meeting of experts at Ort Gmunden (Austria) organized by Austria and Indonesia will be a consensus text from the meeting for transmittal to the third session of IFF, with strong support from diverse communities of interest groups including developing countries, donors and non-governmental organizations. The output will service and feed into the intergovernmental process, highlighting mechanisms to/for:

(a) Identification, definition and prioritization of research (including review);

(b) Consortia/networks for global and regional research;

(c) Capacity-building;

(d) Implementation, including constraints to utilization, and interface between research and user communities;

(e) Mobilization of funding.

63. The expert meeting will also address such issues as:

(a) The meaning of globalization and new information technology for forest research. For instance, IUFRO, especially in the past two to three years, has been dynamic as an international institution, with considerable potential for impact and delivery of research capacity-building, covering both biophysical and managerial aspects of forests;

(b) New technology and mechanisms for sharing information. There are multiple initiatives to develop information systems. The meeting therefore plans a strategic-level review of information needs for IFF;

(c) Funding mechanisms: already, many donor agencies are paying for global environmental public goods. The potential for carbon emissions trading could be greater than current ODA, with major ramifications as regards the demand for research and resources for research.

Notes

[1] See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[2] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/52/25), annex, decision 19/22.

[3] See Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994 (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).

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Programme element II.e (ii)

Matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the IPF process

Forest-related work under existing instruments

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report contains a brief discussion of programme element II.e (ii), "Forest-related work under existing instruments" (for the related programme element II.e (i), "Forest-related work of international and regional organizations", see E/CN.17/1998/IFF/5). It reviews 20 existing international legal instruments with relevance to forests. For each instrument, when relevant, the following items are elaborated: (a) particular developments within the framework of the instrument with relevance to forests; (b) the possible further application of the instrument to forests; and (c) analysis of the instrument with reference to an all-encompassing holistic approach to forests.

Information is presented in order to identify existing gaps and overlaps in international forest-related instruments and their implementation. The report notes that all functions and roles of forests have been regulated to some extent. Most instruments reviewed have links or have established links on forest-related issues. However, the report also emphasizes the lack of coordination and the great fragmentation in forest-related work. There is no all-encompassing, cohesive and comprehensive legal instrument on forests, and some important forest issues or regions are omitted from all the instruments reviewed.

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The report concludes with four preliminary options for action to fill the gaps in the international forest arena, including (a) adaptation of existing conventions to new forest-sector demands; (b) preparation of specific agreements on forest topics that have not been regulated; (c) preparation of a comprehensive agreement to take into account the holistic nature of forest issues; or (d) continuing the practice of preparing "soft law" instruments that are not legally binding.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), in its programme of work adopted at its first session, decided under category II to consider matters left pending and other issues arising from the programme elements of the former Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) process, and to include, under programme element (e), "Forest-related work of international and regional organizations" the following mandate: "Further examine the forest-related work being carried out by international and regional organizations and under existing instruments in order to identify gaps and overlaps" (see E/CN.17/IFF/1997/4, para. 7, category II (e)).

2. The present report has been prepared to facilitate the substantive discussion on the forest-related work being carried out under existing instruments. The document is complementary to the report of the Secretary-General on programme element II.e (i), "Forest-related work of international and regional organizations" (E/CN.17/IFF/1998/5). It reviews 20 existing international legal instruments with relevance to forests, 17 of which are legally binding, while 10 instruments are global and seven regional. In addition, three non-legally binding instruments considered most relevant and constituting a holistic approach towards forests are examined (see list of all 20 instruments in annex).

3. It is understood that there is a difference between legally binding and non-legally binding instruments. Some instruments are not yet binding because they have not entered into force; others are not intended to be legally binding. From a legal point of view, it is difficult to compare the two categories with one another. The present report partly disregards this legal reality in some instances for the sake of analytical convenience and to allow a subject-oriented comparison that identifies gaps and overlaps of international instruments of relevance to forests.

4. To present an overview of existing gaps and overlaps in international instruments in relation to forests, tables 1, 2 and 3 are included at the end of the text in order to illustrate the contents and implementation of the instruments studied; the relation of these instruments with the role and functions that forests may fulfil; and the relation of these instruments with the basic preconditions that may be necessary to meet the role and functions of forests.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS FOR ACTION ON PROGRAMME ELEMENT V.1, "INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS AND INSTRUMENTS"

5. In its original mandate for IPF concerning its programme element V.1, the Commission recognized the need to develop a clearer view of the work being carried out by international organizations and multilateral institutions and under existing instruments, as appropriate, including the Convention on

Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) in forest-related issues, including United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) decisions related to forests and the institutional linkages emanating therefrom, in order to identify any gaps, areas requiring enhancement, as well as any areas of duplication. In its final report, IPF agreed on several conclusions and adopted four proposals for action on programme element V.2 (see E/CN.17/1997/12).

6. Governments, as part of the IPF process, reviewed the major issues and agreed on conclusions and proposals for action with regard to the forest-related work of international organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments. For example, in its conclusions reflecting the overall thrust of the discussion under this topic, the Panel acknowledged that no single multilateral body, organization or instrument currently has either a mandate or capacity to address, in a balanced, holistic and mutually reinforcing way, all issues that are currently on the international agenda with respect to all types of forests. It also noted that existing forest-related legally binding instruments do not deal comprehensively with all issues relating to forests, including sustainable forest management. Accordingly, the present document has been prepared to support IFF in its further examination of the forest-related work being carried out under existing instruments in order to identify gaps and overlaps.

7. In its proposals for action, the Panel called on countries to support the work on forest-related issues of international and regional organizations and agencies and under relevant instruments. It also requested countries to guide relevant international and regional institutions and those administering instruments, through their governing bodies, to accelerate incorporation into the relevant work programmes of the forest-related results of UNCED and of further progress achieved since then, including the proposals for action adopted by IPF.

II. FOREST-RELATED WORK BEING CARRIED OUT UNDER EXISTING INSTRUMENTS

A. Forests under existing instruments

1. Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat

Adoption:	2 February 1971
Entry into force:	21 December 1975
Parties:	106 (03/1998)
Web site:	http://www2.iucn.org/themes/ramsar

8. Forests are not of key importance in the Ramsar Convention. A more central role is not currently envisaged. The Eleventh World Forestry Congress, held in October 1997, recommended that Governments pay more attention to mangrove and coastal forest ecosystems. The Ramsar Convention seems to be the appropriate forum in which to do so; however, the Convention is only applicable to certain types of forest; some parts of the world are less well represented, notably the Caribbean, the Near East, Southern Africa and the South Pacific; and the Convention focuses strongly on conservation only.

2. Convention Concerning the Protection of World Culture and Natural Heritage

Adoption:	16 November 1972
Entry into force:	17 December 1975
Parties:	152 (10/1997)
Web site:	http://www.unesco.org/whc

9. The inclusion of a forest in the World Heritage List recognizes its universal interest and value, as well as the national sovereignty of the State over that forest. The World Heritage Fund can be accessed for funds. In particular, indigenous populations living in forests can lobby for inclusion. However, the Convention does not have any specific focus on forests; inclusion in the World Heritage List requires the consent of the State concerned (article 11.2); the Convention focuses solely on preservation and protection; and only forests of universal value can fall under the scope of the Convention.

3. Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

	Vienna Convention	Montreal Protocol
Adoption:	22 March 1985	16 September 1987
Entry into force:	22 September 1988	1 January 1989
Parties:	166 (03/1998)	165
Web site:	http://www.unep.org/secretar/ozone	

10. The full implementation of the ozone regime would be beneficial to forests. However, willingness to comply seems to be diminishing. Many States have not yet ratified the London and Copenhagen amendments to the Montreal Protocol. Even with full implementation of the Protocol by all countries of the world, the ozone layer will continue to deplete until the year 2000. The ozone regime was designed to deal with a specific problem, i.e., the depletion of the ozone layer. No special attention has been given to the effects of depletion of the ozone layer on forests.

4. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

	Convention	Kyoto Protocol
Adoption:	9 May 1992	11 December 1997
Entry into force:	21 March 1994	not yet in force
Parties:	174 (03/1998)	-
Web site:	http://www.unfccc.org	

11. The recent adoption of the Kyoto Protocol could have great relevance for forests. It states that each Annex 1 Party shall, in achieving its quantified emission limitation and reduction commitment, implement and further elaborate policies and measures in accordance with national circumstances, such as the protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, taking into account its commitments under relevant international environmental agreements, the promotion of sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation (article 2.1 (a) (ii)). Further, article 3.3 of the Protocol declares that the net changes in greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks resulting from direct human induced land-use change and forestry activities, limited to afforestation, reforestation and deforestation since 1990, measured as verifiable changes in carbon stocks in each commitments period, shall be used to meet the commitments under the article of each Party included in Annex 1. Before the first meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Protocol, Annex 1 countries will have to provide data of their carbon stocks in 1990 to enable estimates of changes in subsequent years (article 3.4) so that, for example, changes in greenhouse gas removals by sinks can be subtracted from the assigned amount for that Party.

12. The implementation of the Kyoto Protocol will put more emphasis on the role of forests as sinks. Further, the eleventh World Forestry Congress concluded that the Joint Implementation approach under the climate regime is regarded by some as a promising instrument for the protection of tropical rainforests. However, the compliance with the Kyoto Protocol is regarded as unbalanced since forests are regarded as mainly providing one function, carbon sink. The ecological quality of forests is largely irrelevant in the instrument. Large plantations of monoculture may help to lock up carbon but will do little to protect biodiversity in forests.

5. Convention on Biological Diversity

Adoption:	5 May 1992
Entry into force:	29 December 1993
Parties:	172 (03/98)
Text:	UNEP/Bio.Div/N7-INC.5/4, 31 ILM 822
Web site:	http://www.biodiv.org/forest.html

13. The implementation of the programme of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity on forest biological diversity would be of great importance to forests and the work of IFF since it contains many elements of interest to both. In particular, the work of the Convention on ecosystems, genetic resources and traditional knowledge is relevant to IFF, and vice versa. The fourth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention in May 1998 adopted a programme of work for forest biological diversity (see its decision IV/7) to enhance Parties' abilities to realize the objectives of the Convention through improved implementation, by encouraging and helping Parties to develop measures for enhancing the integration of conservation and the sustainable use of biological diversity into their national forest and land-use programmes and forest-management systems. The programme is designed to identify traditional forest systems of conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, and to promote the wider application, use and role of traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management and the equitable sharing of benefits, in accordance with article 8 (j) and other related provisions of the Convention.

14. The focus on biodiversity, however, precludes other key areas of concern on the international forest agenda, such as multiple benefits provided by forests, market access for forest products and non-discriminatory trade practices. Since biodiversity is more concentrated in tropical forests, these get more emphasis than other types of forests.

6. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Adoption:	17 June 1994
Entry into force:	26 December 1996
Parties:	122 (03/98)
Web site:	http://www.unccd.ch

15. At its first meeting, the Conference of Parties to the Convention established a global mechanism for promoting, mobilizing and rationalizing the transfer of financial and technological assistance, and collecting and

disseminating information. The global mechanism has not yet become operative; it might offer an opportunity to raise financial assistance for forest-related projects. Another feature of the Convention is the provision for partnership arrangements. These agreements spell out the role of each partner, including donor agencies and Governments, recipient Governments and non-governmental organizations. They can be used for many different purposes, such as mobilizing financial resources, reorienting assistance mechanisms to fit the Convention's approach, making inventories of funding sources or developing new models of technological cooperation. They can also be used to include forest-related matters. Another application of the Convention for forest-related matters would be exchange and use of data on issues relevant for both topics.

16. One of the fundamental issues in the Convention is the determination of the nature, extent and socio-economic impact and costs of desertification. The lack of adequate support and practical indicators of land degradation has long restricted the availability of good scientific data. Work on assessing the economic and social aspects of desertification is gathering momentum, but much more effort is still required, particularly on environmental economics, the effects of trade and socio-economic questions.

7. Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (ILO Convention 169)

Adoption:	27 June 1989
Entry into force:	5 September 1991
Parties:	12 (04/98)
Web site:	http://www.ilo.org

17. This Convention could be an important instrument in relation to forests. A comprehensive forest strategy should include reference to the participation of indigenous people in national land-use plans and programmes (see Forest Principles 5 (a) and 12 (d), and IPF programme element I.1). The IPF mandate includes the element of how traditional forest-related knowledge can be better protected and benefits more equitably shared, preferably with legal grounding, such as for governing access to and use of traditional forest-related knowledge. The IPF proposals for action include encouraging countries to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate national forest programmes, including a wide range of approaches for sustainable forest management, taking into consideration the recognition and respect for customary and traditional rights of, inter alia, indigenous people and local communities, and secure land tenure arrangements. The Leticia Declaration, prepared as part of the IPF process, states that the rights, welfare, viewpoints and interests of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent peoples should be central to all decision-making about forests at the local, national, regional and international levels, and that indigenous peoples and other forest peoples constitute an important cross-cutting theme in the forest agenda, affecting many other issues.

18. The most important drawback of the Convention, however, is its limited ratification. The Convention is not global in its scope: of the 12 Parties, eight are from South/Central America, three from Europe and one from the Pacific. Some indigenous peoples consider that the Convention undermines indigenous aspirations by emphasizing "participation" and "consultation" rather than self-determination, although the provisions in Article 7 are strong. Usually, the Convention is recalled as a conservation Convention, and the emphasis on sustainable use is often overlooked. Indigenous groups do not have direct access to the International Labour Organization (ILO) reporting procedures. Some States regard the provisions of the Convention to be at odds with the concept of State sovereignty.

8. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Adoption:	3 March 1973
Entry into force:	1 July 1975
Parties:	143 (12/1997)
Web site:	via http://www.unep.ch

19. In the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the identification of timber species has the potential to be of great relevance to forests. The Conference of Parties to the Convention, at its tenth meeting, decided that the Parties should determine whether national standard organizations have already developed agreed vernacular nomenclatures for timber species, and if so, should provide this information to the secretariat. A list of agreed scientific names and their agreed vernacular names should be provided to timber importers and agencies dealing with CITES enforcement and border inspections for such standardization to be useful.

20. CITES, however, is only concerned with a limited amount of species, and the balance between economic and conservation interests is sometimes missing. The CITES focus on transnational trade and border controls is becoming more difficult to maintain with the current expansion of free trade areas.

9. International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)

Adoption:	26 January 1994
Entry into force:	1 January 1997
Parties:	51
Web site:	http://www.itto.or.jp

21. ITTA is intensifying its work on certification, as indicated at the twenty-third session of the International Tropical Timber Council (1997). It studies the overall developments since 1996, including details of experiences gained in seven countries. One underlying assumption of an effective use of certification is the existence of a market where certified products are preferred by buyers and consumers. The other is that forest owners and managers, processing industry, suppliers and distributors can enjoy equitable benefits from certification. In the context of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) year 2000 objective, a set of revised criteria and indicators have been developed, aiming at offering practical assistance to member countries in their efforts towards sustainable forest management, and will provide a measure by which to monitor these. Other developments of interest are the commitment made by ITTO members to review the scope of the agreement four years after its entry into force, and the possibility of extending the concept of the year 2000 objective for all types of forests.

22. This instrument, however, concerns only tropical hardwood (although the word "tropical" has been removed from some clauses compared to the 1983 ITTA). It provides a forum for producers and consumers only; some producer countries are de facto consumer countries.

10. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization

	GATT	WTO
Adoption:	30 October 1947	15 April 1994
Entry into force:	1 January 1948	1 January 1995
Parties:	126	132 (09/1997)

23. The trade and environment debate relating to forest products and services could in the near future deal with several issues applicable to forests, such as the improvement of market access to forest products and services, including further reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade; the promotion of community-based processing and marketing of wood and non-wood forest products; the development and exchange of experiences in respect of the implementation of full-cost internationalization and its application to sustainable forest management, and relevant policy mechanisms; and the promotion of certification of forest products.

24. Under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Governments may decide that international standards are not appropriate because of, for example, fundamental technological problems. There is uncertainty about the role of "eco-labelling" criteria in the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement since it covers mandatory rules and standards, and eco-labelling is often done on a voluntary basis. Another recent WTO agreement that might have implications for forests is the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures. Government assistance to meet environmental requirements is included in this category of subsidies provided that such assistance meets certain conditions. The Subsidies

Agreement includes attention for adapting existing facilities to meet new government-imposed environmental requirements that result in greater constraints and financial burdens on such firms.

25. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations made significant progress in improving market access for forest products, especially in terms of reducing tariffs for all types of forest products. Yet barriers to international trade in forest products, particularly non-tariff barriers, could still impede access of forest products to the international market. Market transparency of forest products and cost internalization of forest management are two issues that remain unresolved.

11. Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, and Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution on Long-Term Financing of the Cooperative Programmes for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-Range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP)

	Convention	EMEP
Adoption:	13 November 1979	28 September 1984
Entry into force:	16 March 1983	28 January 1988
Parties:	43 (03/1998)	37
Web site:	http://www.unece.org/env	

26. The 1988 Nitrogen Protocol introduced an innovation in the form of environmental quality standards, aiming to establish levels beyond which pollution is not permitted. This approach sets targets for acceptable levels of environmental interference by setting "critical loads" that can be translated into individual country targets (article 2). IPF welcomed the widespread application of the critical loads approach adopted under the Convention, and commended the approach for consideration by other States whose forests are or may be affected by air pollution. IPF encouraged countries to adopt a preventative approach to the reduction of damaging air pollution, which may include long-range transboundary air pollution, in national strategies for sustainable development, and further encouraged the development of methods for the assessment and monitoring of national-level criteria and indicators for airborne pollutants in the context of sustainable forest management.

12. Amazon Cooperation Treaty

Adoption: 3 July 1978

Entry into force: 2 August 1980

Parties: 8

Web site: http://www.spt-tca.org.

27. The Treaty for Amazon Cooperation is becoming increasingly important for the forests of the Amazon region. Its effective implementation is enhanced by the acquiring of necessary funds, the great variety of projects, and the organizational structure under the Treaty. The Treaty establishes an important political forum. Further implementation of programmes and projects would be relevant to forests. The Treaty for Amazon Cooperation is mainly concerned with economic development; the ongoing emphasis on the sovereignty issue may hamper international cooperation and collaboration.

13. Regional Convention for the Management and Conservation of the Natural Forest Ecosystems and the Development of Forest Plantations

Adoption: 29 October 1993

Entry into force: Not yet in force

Parties: -

Web site: http://www.ccad.org.gt

(Central American Commission on Environment and Development)

28. The objectives of the Convention are (a) to promote national and regional mechanisms that will prevent a change in land use of those areas covered with forests that are occupying lands with forestry potential, and to recover deforested areas; (b) to establish a homogeneous soil classification system through the reorientation of settlement policies in forest lands; (c) the discouragement of actions that favour forest destruction in lands with forestry potential; and (d) the promotion of land-use planning processes and of sustainable options (article 2). The signatories reaffirm their sovereign right to proceed to use, manage and develop their forests in agreement with their own policies and regulation, as a function of their need for development, conserving and sustainably using their forests as a social and economic function while ensuring that their activities do not cause environmental damages to their own or other countries in the region. The Convention will oblige the Parties to promote participation of all interested parties, including inhabitants of forested areas in the planning, implementation and evaluation of national forest policies, and to recognize their rights, obligations and needs, and it will strengthen the application of national forest policies and strategies. The

Central American Commission on Environment and Development is the main executive organ of the Convention (article 7).

14. Protocol 10 on Sustainable Management of Forest Resources of the Agreement Amending the Fourth APC-EC Convention of Lomé

Adoption:	4 November 1995
Entry into force:	Not yet in force
Parties:	–
Text:	The ACP-EU Courier No. 155, 1996
Web site:	Not known

29. The implementation of Protocol 10 could play an important role for the forests located in the ACP States. It attempts to provide a balanced approach of various functions of forests.

15. Convention on the Protection of the Alps and Protocol for the Implementation of the Alpine Convention 1991 in the Area of Mountain Forests

	Alpine Convention	Mountain Forest Protocol
Adoption:	7 November 1991	27 February 1996 (8 States)
Entry into force:	6 March 1995	Not yet entered into force
Parties:	5 (01/1997)	–
Website:	Not available	(No English text of Protocol available yet)

30. When the Mountain Forest Protocol to the Alpine Convention enters into force, it could form a comprehensive framework for the region regarding its forests. It attempts to provide a balanced approach between conservation and economic functions of mountain forests, and stresses the need for international cooperation. It also contains provisions on monetary compensation in order for States to implement the protocol, such as when designating an area as forest reserve (articles 10 and 11).

16. North American Free Trade Agreement Between the Government of the United States, the Government of Canada and the Government of the United Mexican States (NAFTA) and North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC)

	NAFTA	NAAEC
Adoption:	17 December 1992	13 September 1993
Entry into force:	1 January 1994	1 January 1994
Parties:	3	3
Web site:	http://www.nafta-sec-alena.org http://www.cec.org	

31. Although NAAEC contains no direct reference to forests, it provides in its objectives for, inter alia, increased cooperation to better conserve, protect and enhance the environment, including wild fauna and flora; protection and improvement of the environment; promotion of sustainable development; avoidance of creating trade distortions or new trade barriers; and public participation in the development of environmental laws. All of these objectives could have direct relevance for forests. Its elaborate part five on consultation and resolution of disputes regarding a "persistent pattern of failure" by a Party to effectively enforce its environmental law could be applied in forest-related matters.

17. Treaty Establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

Adoption:	5 November 1993
Entry into force:	8 December 1994
Parties:	20 Member Countries
Website:	http://www.comesa.int

32. Chapter 16 of COMESA has great potential for the regulation of forest issues in the region. The implementation of COMESA aims exclusively at reaching a free trade area, as can be concluded from its activities since 1994 and from the five priority areas identified. There is no balanced strategy regarding forests, as one would expect from the text of the Agreement.

18. Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles)

Adopted: 14 June 1992

Agreed by: 176 States at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

Text: A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. III)

Web site: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/iff

33. Together with chapter 11 of Agenda 21 (see para. 34 below), the Forest Principles form the basis for discussions and consensus-building within IPF and IFF (see para. 35 below).

19. Agenda 21

Adopted: 14 June 1992

Agreed by: 176 States at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

Text: A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I)

Web site: http://www.un.org.esa/sustdev

34. Application of Agenda 21 and its chapter 11 on combating deforestation takes place in various national and international forums; monitoring its implementation at the intergovernmental level takes place in the Commission on Sustainable Development and the IPF/IFF process.

20. Conclusions and proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

Adopted: 21 February 1997

Agreed by: 53 States (Members of the Commission on Sustainable Development/IFF), endorsed by General Assembly in June 1997

Text: E/CN.17/IFF/1997/12

Web site: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/iff

35. In addition to several references to the Forest Principles and Agenda 21, the proposals for action of IPF include several explicit references to other international instruments. Among these instruments, the Convention on

Biological Diversity is represented most prominently, for example in such areas as underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, the promotion of understanding and use of traditional forest-related knowledge, and advancing international understanding of the relationship between intellectual property rights and such traditional knowledge. The proposals for action also requested the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to take note of the work of various existing initiatives on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management to ensure that the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity on developing and implementing biodiversity indicators would be consistent with and complementary to criteria and indicators initiatives. There were also reference to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the IPF proposals for action on international cooperation, research and technology transfer.

36. As recommended by the Panel, the governing bodies of organizations and instruments are encouraged to incorporate the implementation of the IPF proposals for action into their mandates and programmes. Countries are also encouraged to integrate the IPF proposals for action into their national forest programmes. Governing bodies, such as the ITTO Council of ITTA, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) have already acknowledged and recommended the inclusion of relevant IPF proposals for action into their respective work programmes. The IPF proposals for action also form the basis for the discussion that will take place within IFF at three substantive sessions. Collectively, the two processes, IPF and IFF, taken together, will finally constitute a comprehensive representation of the current international consensus on all types of forests.

B. Relationships between instruments and functions of forests

37. Additional information on the 20 international instruments reviewed in the present report is summarized in tables 1, "Global legally binding instruments", 2, "Regional legally binding instruments", and 3, "Non-legally binding instruments", which illustrate the contents and implementation of the instruments, including additional protocols and decisions of their respective Conference of parties. The tables present the relation of these instruments with the productive, environmental and social role and functions that forests may fulfil, and also include reference to the relation of these instruments with some basic preconditions that are deemed necessary in such areas as capacity-building and research to ensure the sustainability of those forest functions.

38. The tables indicate whether a particular function fulfilled by forests has been regulated by the international instrument and/or its implementation activities, on a relative basis. The idea behind presenting the information on the instruments elaborated in the present report in this format is to depict the areas of gaps and overlaps; the darker the cell, the more the issue has been included in an instrument and/or in its implementation activities.

39. It is assumed that all instruments have an equal status: no distinction has been made between instruments that have entered into force and instruments that have not yet acquired that status. It is also assumed that all instruments

have the same adherence; in other words, the tables do not include differentiation related to the number of Parties to the instrument.

III. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS AND OPTIONS FOR ACTION

40. As shown in tables 1, 2 and 3, most functions and roles of forests have been regulated to some extent. Most instruments have links or have established links on forest-related issues. On the other hand, the analysis also articulates the great fragmentation in relation to forests. There does not exist an all-encompassing, cohesive and comprehensive legal instrument on forests; certain aspects or regions are omitted in any individual instrument.

41. Among the many possible options for filling the gaps in the international forest arena, the Forum may wish to consider: (a) adapting existing conventions to new forest-sector demands; (b) preparing specific agreements under existing instruments on forest topics that have not been regulated; (c) preparing a comprehensive agreement to deal with forests in a holistic manner; or (d) filling gaps with "soft-law" instruments that are non-legally binding.

Annex

LIST OF INSTRUMENTS WITH RELEVANCE FOR FORESTS[a]

I. LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENTS

A. Global

Environment, sustainable development

1. Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat

2. Convention Concerning the Protection of World Culture and Natural Heritage

3. Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer

4. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

5. Convention on Biological Diversity

6. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Human rights

7. Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries

Trade

8. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

9. International Tropical Timber Agreement

10. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization

B. Regional

Environment, sustainable development

11. Convention on Long-Range *Transboundary* Air Pollution

12. Amazon Cooperation Treaty

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[a] For more detail on each instrument, see main text, sect. II.A, under the same subsection headings (1-20); see also tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

13. Regional Convention for the Management and Conservation of Natural Forest Ecosystems and the Development of Forest Plantations

14. Protocol 10 on Sustainable Management of Forest Resources of the Agreement Amending the Fourth APC-EC Convention of Lomé

15. Convention on the Protection of the Alps

Trade, economic integration

16. North American Free Trade Agreement

17. Treaty Establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

II. NON-LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENTS

18. Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests

19. Agenda 21

20. Conclusions and Proposals for Action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

Table 1. Global legal instruments

INSTRUMENT	FUNCTIONS / ROLE OF FORESTS											PRECONDITIONS FOR FUNCTIONS				
	Productive/trade					Protective / environmental				Social						
	TMB		NTMB			bio-diversity	car-bon	soil	water	cul-tural	trad. use	CICL	CBRE	ScT	Part	Monit
	TRP	NTRP	TRP	NTRP	EF											
Ramsar						■	▨	▨	■							
World Heritage						▨				■					■	
Ozone													▨	■		■
Climate							■	■	▨					■		■
Biodiversity			▨	▨		■		▨	▨	▨	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	■
Desertification						▨		■	▨	▨	■	▨	▨	▨	■	▨
Indigenous People						▨				■	■				■	
CITES	■	▨	■	▨		▨						■				▨
ITTA	■		■			▨						■				▨
GATT/WTO	■	■	■	■		▨						▨				■

□ Not regulated ▨ Regulated to some extent ■ Regulated extensively

TMB	timber
TRP	tropical
NTRP	non-tropical
NTMB	non-timber products
EF	general economic functions
trad.use	traditional use

CICL	criteria and indicators; certification/labelling
CBRE	capacity building, research, education
ScT	science and technology
Part	participation
Monit	monitoring

Table 2. Regional legal instruments

INSTRUMENT	FUNCTIONS / ROLE OF FORESTS											PRECONDITIONS				
	Productive/trade					Protective / environmental				Social						
	TMB		NTMB		EF	bio-diversity	car-bon	soil	water	cul-tural	trad. use	CICL	CBRE	ScT	Part	Monit
	TRP	NTRP	TRP	NTRP												
Air Pollution								■	▨					■		■
Amazon Cooper					■	▨		▨		■	▨		▨	▨	▨	
Central American					■	▨		■		▨	▨				■	
Lomé IV	■					▨					■	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Alpine					▨		▨	■	▨		■		▨		▨	▨
NAFTA		■		■											■	▨
COMESA	■		■		■								▨			

□ Not regulated ▨ Regulated to some extent ■ Regulated extensively

TMB timber
TRP tropical
NTRP non-tropical
NTMB non-timber products
EF general economic functions
trad.use traditional use

CICL criteria and indicators; certification/labelling
CBRE capacity building, research, education
ScT science and technology
Part participation
Monit monitoring

Table 3. Non-legally binding instruments

NON-LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENTS	FUNCTIONS / ROLE OF FORESTS											PRECONDITIONS				
	Productive/trade					Protective / environmental				Social						
	TMB		NTMB		EF	bio-diversity	carbon	soil	water	cultural	trad. use	CICL	CBRE	ScT	Part	Monit
	TRP	NTRP	TRP	NTRP												
Forest Principles	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	▨	▨		▨	■	■	▨	■	▨	■	
Agenda 21. Ch.11	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	■	▨	■	▨	▨	■
IPF Conclusions and Proposals for Action	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨					▨	■	■	■	■	■

□ Not regulated ▨ Regulated to some extent ■ Regulated extensively

TMB	timber
TRP	tropical
NTRP	non-tropical
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EF	general economic functions
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Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda*

PROMOTING AND FACILITATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSALS FOR ACTION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS AND REVIEWING, MONITORING AND REPORTING ON PROGRESS IN THE MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF FORESTS: MONITORING PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION

Letter dated 15 July 1998 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the countries of the Six-country Initiative, Germany has the honour to present the Report of the Government-led Initiative in Support of the United Nations Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) entitled "Putting the IPF proposals for action into practice". This International Expert Consultation was held in Baden-Baden, Germany, from 29 June to 3 July 1998.

I have the honour to request you to have the report distributed as an official document of the second session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, to be held in Geneva from 24 August to 4 September 1998.

(Signed) Gerhard HENZE

* E/CN.17/IFF/1998/1.

98-21539 (E) 050898

/...

GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF THE
UN INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON FORESTS (IFF)

"PUTTING THE IPF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION INTO PRACTICE"

REPORT

of the

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION

June 29 to July 3, 1998, Baden-Baden, Germany

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To support the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests in its task to facilitate the implementation of the Proposals for Action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, the Governments of Finland, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Uganda, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland joined in a Government-led Six-Country Initiative entitled "Putting the IPF Proposals for Action into Practice". A guide to assess the proposals was developed and six country case studies were carried out. The outcomes were summarized in a Synthesis Report which served as background material for the International Expert Consultation which met in Baden-Baden, Germany from 29 June to 3 July 1998.

The International Expert Consultation was attended by 109 experts from 37 countries from all regions as well as from international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector. The Consultation reached the following main conclusions and recommendations which will be set out in a full report to the IFF:

1. The IPF Proposals for Action are a means to an end, i.e. the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. Their implementation at the national level involves assessment, integration and internalisation within existing national action oriented processes. The outcomes of other international agreements and initiatives should be taken into account in this process.
2. A systematic assessment as developed by the Initiative has been found to be an important tool for implementing the Proposals for Action at the national level and therefore other countries are recommended to undertake a similar assessment within national processes and priorities. A national mechanism to guide and coordinate the implementation of the Proposals of Action is encouraged.
3. The relevance of the Proposals for Action has to be determined at the national level according to national priorities and constraints, taking into account international and regional obligations. The value of the *proposals* is mainly strategic. The operational value, however, is to be derived from their transformation into action in the national context. National forest programmes, as defined by IPF, are seen in many countries as the most important vehicle for the implementation of the Proposals for Action at the national level.
4. Adequate mechanisms for broad and effective stakeholder participation are vital elements for the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action, e.g. assessment, integration and internalisation of the *proposals* into the national forest-related policy frameworks. This process should build on existing arrangements as far as possible. Awareness building is also essential to ensure that all relevant stakeholders understand the contents, significance and implications of the IPF Proposals for Action.
5. The outcomes of international processes, such as the IPF Proposals for Action, should be communicated to stakeholders groups in a clear and operational manner which facilitates their implementation at the national level. Improved feedback from the international to the national level, as well as within countries, is needed to communicate the IPF Proposals for Action and their implications for national situations. Effective two-way communication should be put in place.
6. The international community should establish well coordinated efficient and effective means to assist developing countries and those with economies in transition in initiating the analysis of the IPF Proposals for Action, and in establishing innovative financing mechanisms for their implementation.
7. Interlinkages with other international instruments and initiatives should be promoted to bring together the various disparate approaches influencing forestry.

Looking to the future, the International Expert Consultation recognized that in order to enhance the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action, there is a need for effective follow-up beyond IFF, with a view to secure a continued structured policy dialogue at the international level, including issues to be dealt with under IFF Category III.

SIX-COUNTRY GOVERNMENT-LED INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF THE UN INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON FORESTS (IFF)

"PUTTING THE IPF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION INTO PRACTICE"

REPORT OF THE

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION

June 29 to July 3, 1998, Baden-Baden, Germany

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Following the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS) in June 1997, the ECOSOC formally established the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) under the aegis of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) in order to continue the global dialogue on forests. During its first meeting in October 1997, IFF adopted its Programme of Work, which includes the task to promote, facilitate and monitor the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action (*proposals*) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). This task will be an important subject for the substantive discussions under the Programme Element I.a (Promoting and Facilitating the Implementation of IPF's Proposals for Action) during the second IFF meeting to be held from August 24 to September 4, 1998 in Geneva.

The *proposals* were agreed upon as the result of intergovernmental negotiations under IPF. UNGASS has adopted the IPF Proposals for Action Report and its *proposals*, which "*represent significant progress and consensus on a wide range of forest issues*". It is now acknowledged by countries that they are under political obligation to give effect to the *proposals* at national level.

The *proposals* suggest measures to be taken at international, regional and particularly national levels. However, it was not made clear by which ways and means countries should implement the *proposals* and translate them into country-specific action to improve their national forest-related policy framework as well as the effectiveness of planning and implementation. Further guidance with respect to national implementation appears necessary, given the following characteristics of the *proposals*:

- the *proposals* are clustered around 11 thematic "elements" and "sub-elements" but necessary interlinkages between the *proposals* are not indicated
- there is frequent repetition and overlap of issues and proposed actions
- *proposals* vary extensively in nature (including basic principles, general guidelines and operational recommendations) as well as their themes
- issues to be addressed are not always clearly identified
- the level of intervention is not always spelled out
- those responsible for implementation are not sufficiently identified, particularly for the national level

- interlinkages with existing international and regional agreements, legally-binding instruments, programmes and initiatives are not clearly identified in political, strategic and operational terms

Several national and regional activities have been launched to promote and facilitate the implementation of the *proposals*. These include national processes in Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands and other countries, the "Interagency Partnership on Forests: Implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action" by the Interagency Task Force on Forests (ITFF), and FAO regional meetings in Asia, Africa and Latin America on "International Co-operation and Resource Mobilisation for National Forest Programmes".

2. Six-country Initiative

In order to support the IFF in its task to promote and facilitate the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action, the Governments of Finland, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Uganda and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) joined in a government-led Six-country Initiative (Initiative) entitled "Putting the IPF Proposals for Action into Practice".

Objectives and Outputs

The objectives of the Initiative were twofold:

(i) to enhance implementation of the *proposals* at national level, and
(ii) to develop guidance from country experiences for consideration by IFF.

The Initiative produced several outputs in the following order:

(a) a Practitioners' Guide to assist countries in the assessment of the *proposals*,
(b) six national case studies on the assessment of the *proposals* at the national level with identification of country-specific approaches to their implementation,
(c) a Synthesis Report based on the six national case studies,
(d) recommendations to IFF and the international community on how to approach the implementation of the *proposals* produced by an International Expert Consultation in Baden-Baden, Germany.

Implementation and Methodology

The Initiative was launched in a preparatory meeting in February 1998, in Bonn, Germany. To assist the six countries in their case studies and to make the results comparable, a "Practitioner's Guide" on the assessment of the *proposals* was prepared by the Initiative. The purpose was to provide a user-friendly, annotated version of the *proposals*.

The Guide was developed as an initial screening process of the *proposals*. It singled out those *proposals* to be addressed at national level. The purpose was to identify the place and addressees of each *proposal* within the institutional setting.

The six case studies were prepared by the co-sponsoring countries from February to May 1998. The *proposals* were assessed and critically reviewed against the national setting in terms of national forest-related policies, the institutional arrangements of the public and pri-

vate sectors, considering the political and socio-economic situation and ecological conditions in each country.

The key questions addressed in the national case studies were:

- which *proposals* are relevant to the national context?
- which actions contained in the *proposals* are already in place or under way, and what is the effectiveness of the actions?
- who is responsible/ influential/ affected?
- how practicable is the implementation of the individual *proposals* and what are the associated opportunities and constraints?
- what can be learned from the national experiences to feed in the international discussion on sustainable forest management
- to what extent is international support required to complement national actions?

The steps designed for executing the national case studies were:

- establishment of a multi-stakeholder task force and secretariat
- briefing and involvement of main stakeholders
- identification of the main elements of the national policy framework (e.g. national forest programme)
- assessment of the individual *proposals*
- suggestions for a national approach for implementing the *proposals*
- preparation of a report on the national case study

It is intended that future steps be taken to continue the national process of implementing the *proposals* in the co-sponsoring countries beyond the Initiative.

Based on the six national case studies, a Synthesis Report was prepared by the Initiative in June, 1998 to capture the essence of the national case studies. The report served as the background material for the International Expert Consultation and will be published under separate cover.

3. International Expert Consultation

An International Expert Consultation took place from June 29 to July 3, 1998 in Baden-Baden, Germany. The specific objectives of the consultation were to:

(i) review the findings of the national case studies and the Synthesis Report on the assessment of the *proposals*, and share information on other ongoing national and regional exercises aimed at the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action; and

(ii) elaborate recommendations as inputs to IFF-2 for the substantive discussion under the Programme Element I.a. to: (a) foster implementation of the *proposals* at the national level, and (b) to increase the co-operation between the international and national levels, also taking into account dialogues and processes of the international forest agenda other than IFF.

The Consultation was attended by a total of 109 experts from 37 countries in the South and the North, as well as from international organisations, NGOs, the private sector, and development financing institutions. The consultation was organised by the six co-sponsoring countries of the Initiative, in co-operation with IFF Secretariat, UNDP and FAO, in a spirit of

partnership. Two Co-chairs, Mr. Untung Iskandar (Indonesia) and Mr. Hans-Peter Schipulle (Germany), conducted the plenary sessions, and four working groups deliberated on substantive issues.

In their joint keynote address, the Co-chairs of IFF, Ambassador Bagher Asadi and Ambassador Ilkka Ristimäki underlined the importance of the following three facts as a starting point for the consultation: (i) there is now an international consensus on the need for a comprehensive forest policy framework for all kinds of forests, and on the need for engagement by all countries in implementing the *proposals*; (ii) both developed and developing countries have responsibilities and commitments to fulfil, though the situations facing each group, and hence their respective responsibilities, are different; and (iii) successful conservation, management and sustainable development of all types of forests at the global level require that developing countries, both forested and with low forest cover, receive adequate financial and other support, for the generation of national capacity and the preparation and implementation of their national forest programmes.

This report is the outcome of the deliberations of the International Expert Consultation. The report is aimed at summarising the views of the participants and conveying their conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of IFF. The report does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of the participating countries or institutions. The Consultation did not seek to represent a negotiated consensus, but rather to develop ideas for consideration by IFF. Hence differing views are apparent in parts of the report.

In sections II and III, the outcome of the working groups and plenary discussions are summarised, and in section IV, the main conclusions and recommendations are listed.

II. ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF IPF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1. Approach to Assessment and Implementation

The *proposals* are a means to an end, i.e. "the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests" which in the following is referred to as "sustainable forest management". The term "implementation" of the *proposals*, as used in the IFF Programme of Work, means (i) the assessment of the *proposals* against the existing national forest-related frameworks in terms of relevance and value according to national priorities, constraints and ongoing activities as well as according to regional and international obligations, (ii) the internalisation and integration of the *proposals* into existing national processes (e.g. national forest programmes and related instruments in other sectors) and (iii) identification of country-specific actions. This approach ensures that the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action becomes part of the respective national processes (e.g. national forest programme) and is not regarded as an additional parallel exercise.

Assessment of the relevance of the *proposals* in the national context was considered to be best conducted as part of a broader process of policy development/reform at the national level. The relevance of the *proposals* can be assessed against:

- existing national frameworks, policies, priorities and programmes in the forest and forest related sectors
- existing situation of the forest sector
- urgent national problems within or beyond the forest sector
- assessment of feasibility and potential impact

- other international commitments relevant to the forest sector

Assessment should focus on national priorities, bearing in mind those issues which are regulated through international instruments, such as the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), the Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (CCD).

It was noted that the assessment of relevance is related not only to the priority of the *proposals* within the national policy, but should moreover be used to check on the need for revising existing policies, as was done in some of the co-sponsoring six countries. In other words, an orientation towards issues, including future scenarios, should complement assessment against the existing policies.

The assessment of the relevance of an individual *proposal* needs to cover the current state and the quality of implementation of the measures already taken in terms of their effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The process of integration, internalisation and therefore adaptation of the *proposals* leads to country-specific actions to be taken, within the context of national forest programmes. The actions deriving from the *proposals* should be consistent with national priorities and address key issues and major constraints, taking into account international and regional obligations.

A "mapping" exercise was suggested as a means to identify actors, instruments and linkages with other sectors relevant to the implementation of the *proposals*, as well as the linkages between the *proposals* and other relevant instruments.

The assessment process undertaken by the six countries was seen as a valuable initial experience in devising a possible common approach, while avoiding the imposition of a prescriptive methodology. The participants emphasised that the systematic methodology and tools developed in the six-country exercise could be used as a guide by other countries in devising their own approaches to the assessment of the *proposals*. The main gap in applying the methodology was that inadequate attention was given to evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation, instead of simply recording whether or not the *proposals* were covered by the national frameworks.

One of the key problems was found to be a lack of clarity in many of the *proposals*, especially as to their meaning in the national context. In part this is due to the nature of the negotiated text. In order to facilitate national-level assessment processes, the language of the *proposals* should be clarified and a considerable effort should be made to raise awareness of their meaning and importance. The Practitioners' Guide has been helpful in clarifying some aspects but a more comprehensive review would be useful. Many participants considered this to be a key element in the strategy to achieve a broad stakeholder participation in the assessment process. Another key problem to be addressed is the fragmented nature and overlaps of the *proposals*.

Australia has undertaken a preliminary systematic assessment of the *proposals* using a slightly different methodology to that of the Initiative. The methodology identified the relevance and priority of the *proposals* to the country, at both national and international levels, and responsibilities and implementation status for each *proposal*. This assessment helped raise awareness of the *proposals* at the sub-national level and helped identify potential gaps in the existing programmes.

2. Implementation Mechanisms

Instruments and Mechanisms

The most effective instruments and mechanisms for the implementation of the *proposals* will tend to build on those which are already in place to achieve sustainable forest management, including both sectoral and extra-sectoral measures. The main instruments in this regard are (i) forest sector reviews, (ii) forest and forest related policies and legislation, (iii) institutions and coordination/participation mechanisms, and (iv) various developmental and other programmes. It is also considered important that the implementation of the *proposals* is linked to the implementation of other forest-related international instruments.

Co-ordination of the implementation of the *proposals* would best take place within the national coordination mechanisms established e.g. for national forest programmes. In the absence of established coordination mechanisms, it was considered feasible to establish a special task force and/or an inter-ministerial committee to co-ordinate both the assessment and implementation of the *proposals*. A multi-stakeholder forum (or fora) for debating the key underlying issues may be necessary to ensure ownership and transparency. The chosen forum (or fora) should be at a level, and of a broad enough membership, to deal effectively with the relevant forest issues, taking into account the divergent interests of stakeholders. Such a forum (or fora) should be organised so as to ensure continuity throughout political changes.

It was stressed that, without sustained, high-level political support and commitment, policies and strategies required for implementing many of the *proposals* have little likelihood of being implemented.

It was further stressed that without international financial and technical support, the implementation of the *proposals* in developing countries and countries with economies in transition would be difficult or even impossible.

Organisation of Stakeholder Participation

Participation of all the key stakeholder groups was seen as an important element of the implementation process, to ensure that the relevance and priority to be given to individual *proposals* would adequately reflect different views in society. The participation of stakeholders should reflect their respective roles and stakes in implementation. If put across properly and widely, the *proposals* could present an opportunity to engage marginalised and other groups in the sectoral dialogue and bring in ideas which have been produced by the international consensus of the IPF outcomes. Some participants stressed that the assessment of the *proposals* should be structured to serve as a framework for a facilitated participatory process. It was also noted that the participation could be initiated by involving key stakeholders in the national preparations for IFF as well as other international negotiation processes. However, due to occasionally conflicting views on key issues, mediation and conflict resolution methods may have to be used.

Each country has to find the best way of securing representative participation in the implementation process of the *proposals*, building on existing mechanisms and arrangements, preferably within the national forest programme framework. Based on the mapping of key stakeholders, a participation strategy can be prepared. This would help identify those groups with a stake or interest in forests, and ways to get their views and interests at various levels adequately reflected in the consultative process. The involvement of indigenous

people and local communities is a particular challenge for the organisation of their effective participation.

The tasks in which stakeholders participate tend to be: (i) assessment, (ii) advice, (iii) exchange of views, (iv) identification of actions and their implementation, and (v) monitoring and reporting. In some countries, national working groups have proven useful for organising participation. Effective participatory mechanisms are often best based on decentralised and permanent fora instead of *ad hoc* arrangements. Assigned lead agencies have an important role in securing relevant and efficient participatory processes. It was noted that self-selection, by stakeholder groups, of their own representatives can help make the participation process more efficient and enhance their support for implementation.

There is a need to develop capacity for meaningful participation in policy development and implementation, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, for which external support is often required.

Targets, Monitoring and Reporting

It is important that the IPF Report and Ist *proposals* are not taken to constitute a standard, criteria and indicators. The implementation of the IPF *proposals* requires nationally-established goals and objectives, which cannot be directly derived from the *proposals*. Targets (or indicators of progress) vary from country to country, according to the national setting as well as their establishment and application.

There were diverse views on whether criteria for assessment and indicators are to be agreed upon at the international level, although the need for a common methodology for setting them up was put forward. Some participants suggested that there is no need to develop a specific set of criteria and indicators for implementing the *proposals*, but those which have been established at national level for sustainable forest management are principally applicable.

Monitoring has two dimensions: (i) the implementation process and (ii) the results, i.e. the extent to which progress has been achieved towards the nationally-set goals and objectives, and the desired status and condition of forests. While some participants supported an appropriate „process monitoring" at the national as well as international levels, it was also advocated to restrict the monitoring and reporting to achievements of the results.

Given the nature of the *proposals*, reporting on their implementation would be voluntary and executed in the framework of national monitoring systems, designed according to national needs. Therefore, monitoring needs to be directed principally at the national level. IFF, as part of the CSD, does not require a separate reporting system, but the existing voluntary reporting for the CSD can be used at the international level. Some participants suggested independent monitoring and/or review as a means to improve credibility.

There are already existing national and international procedures for monitoring and reporting on the progress made in sustainable forest management, partly under the existing international agreements. However, duplication should be avoided and existing reporting systems should be used. They need to be complemented and strengthened to cover adequately the entire scope of the *proposals*. International monitoring and reporting methodologies and procedures should ensure credibility and comparability of nationally-produced information and enable effective feedback on key issues. Countries require useful feedback from the international institutions as an incentive to improve national reporting.

3. Strategic and Operational Value of IPF Proposals for Action

Political Relevance and Implications of the IPF Process

As a consequence of the UNCED process and its follow-up, an improved political awareness on forest issues has been created. It is not possible to separate the influence of IPF from this overall post-UNCED process, including international agreements like CBD, FCCC, and CCDD. IPF has played a significant role in further developing the decisions taken by UNCED and positioning the forest sector in the context of sustainable development. However, the results of these processes are known mainly to the negotiators and the involvement of a wider audience including the policy-makers and practitioners has often been lacking. This includes private sector, NGOs and community-based organisations. As a consequence, there is a somewhat contradictory situation: forestry is well established on the international political agenda. However, it remains a low priority in many countries in terms of actual resource allocation. Other on-going international forest-related processes, such as the regional Criteria & Indicators processes, the Kyoto Protocol, etc. seem to receive more priority than the IPF process. In general, the IPF process is regarded as having high priority mostly in those countries which already assign high priority to the forest sector, or which pursue the notion of an international legally-binding convention on forests.

The following examples highlight the influence of IPF process at the level of individual countries, after about one year for implementing the *proposals*. This is too short a period to assess their real value adequately. In a number of countries, however, some impact can already be observed. In **Indonesia**, the national forest programme has been enriched and better integrated with the national development plan while individual policies are being revised and their enforcement is being strengthened. In **Honduras**, the sectoral consultative forum has been reactivated. In **Finland**, a more holistic approach has been adopted in the national forest programme process, including national and sub-national-level consultations. The *proposals* are also influencing the forest sector development cooperation policies. In **Germany**, no fundamentally new issues have been identified as a result of IPF but the *proposals* have provided a useful framework for a comprehensive review of the complementary forest-related policies, instruments and actions both at national and sub-national levels, and they have facilitated the identification of other sectors' responsibilities for forest issues. Due to time constraints in this initial phase other federal states than Baden-Württemberg and certain issues specific to the national level only could not be covered. In the **UK**, the limitations of fragmented efforts towards sustainable forest management have been recognised and a comprehensive approach is showing its merits in that the "mapping" exercise conducted during the process has pointed to some surprising - and often powerful – stakeholders who had been previously ignored. In **Uganda**, the roles of different stakeholders have been defined and national consultations have started.

In spite of these positive examples of the impacts of the IPF and related initiatives, there are many constraints to be overcome. There is still considerable lack of awareness among stakeholder groups in many countries about the outcomes of IPF and their implications. In many cases, awareness-raising has, for the time being, been limited to government agencies while private sector and civil society are not yet fully involved. In some cases, there is even reluctance among these stakeholder groups to participate when they feel that their views will not be adequately reflected in the outcomes. Limited participation is also reflected in the narrow composition of some national task forces set up for IPF/IFF. On the other hand, increasing efforts are being made world-wide to improve the participation of stakeholder groups in national forest policy processes. This is yielding a higher degree of

consensus on key issues. Nevertheless, there is clearly a need to continue, strengthen and extend these efforts.

Strategic and Operational Value of the *Proposals*

The added value of the *proposals* is derived from several sources: (i) The IPF outcome represents an emerging holistic approach to forest conservation and management globally. (ii) The *proposals* are further-reaching and more action-oriented than the UNCED Forest Principles. (iii) The need for an adequate national policy framework such as a national forest programme has become widely recognised, providing a useful instrument for ensuring holistic implementation. On the other hand, the generic nature of *proposals* limits their direct application at national level. Complementary international and regional-level work (e.g. on Criteria & Indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management) has proven valuable. Both the *proposals* and C&I outline the necessary steps forward and national forest programmes provide suitable mechanisms to implement them.

As the *proposals* can best be used to assess and enrich the current national forest programmes, their main value is strategic and not operational. The operational value is derived from the transformation of the *proposals* into action in the national context. However, the lack of sufficient human and financial resources represent a constraint in giving effect to the *proposals*, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The strategic and operational values of the *proposals* are further constrained by their voluntary nature, and by the lack of national ownership due to limited participation and information, especially by other sectors.

III. IMPROVEMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES IN IMPLEMENTING IPF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1. Linkages between *Proposals* and with Other Instruments

The *proposals* cannot be implemented in isolation from each other due to their numerous interlinkages. As stated, their main value is strategic, not operational. The issues dealt with under the IFF Programme of Work will largely set parameters for national-level implementation. In essence, most issues need further refinement through the international processes.

Many of the *proposals* have direct linkages with other international instruments dealing with forests (CBD, FCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, CCD, etc.) and the various on-going regional and international processes and initiatives to promote sustainable forest management. A key issue is how the existing international instruments can be best coordinated to contribute to sustainable forest management while achieving their proper objectives. Some participants suggested the idea of an international programme on forests for this purpose.

2. Strengthening of Country Participation in IFF

During IPF, it was observed that many countries were not fully prepared on substantive issues. Preparatory work had weaknesses in terms of available information, participation and the identification of national priorities. Some countries lacked adequate human and financial resources to participate in negotiations in a sustained and effective way. Consistency in government positions was also sometimes a problem. Many countries could not

perceive IPF's work in the context of implementing their own national forest programmes. Foresters were not generally well-prepared to make a clear case concerning forest issues at political levels.

On the positive side, the IPF intersessional events were good at sharing information amongst stakeholders and contributed both to international-level capacity building and to some early direct impacts of *proposals*. This is partly because they were focused on specific issues with high priority and urgency (trade, financing, C&I for sustainable forest management, etc.). They helped stakeholders to clarify common issues, broadening the participation among the private sector, NGOs and other bodies outside government agencies.

There is a need to analyse continuously the implications of international legal obligations and other commitments such as the IPF *proposals* at national level, for which a focal point could be assigned, drawing on expertise available from competent institutions in the respective country. Such a focal point could work towards consistency in government positions in international negotiations, together with other appropriate means.

3. Issues to Be Addressed through International-level Action

Drawing on the results of the Initiative, the Expert Consultation stressed a number of issues to be further addressed at international level in order to facilitate national-level implementation of the *proposals*:

- improved international co-operation to support national-level efforts towards sustainable forest management, including capacity building and "forest partnership" mechanisms
- improved co-ordination and co-operation between multilateral organisations to support national-level implementation; ITFF has proved to be one useful instrument towards this end but more work is needed to eliminate unproductive overlaps and to increase effective coordination without imposing undue constraints on innovation by the involved organisations
- further development of C&I for sustainable forest management and their application at international, regional, national and sub-national levels
- elimination of possible negative impacts of structural adjustment programmes and drastic macroeconomic changes, while providing necessary economic and other incentives to encourage forest owners and managers towards sustainable forest management
- enhancing trade conditions to promote sustainable forest management
- improving financing mechanisms, including the emerging instruments such as carbon offset trading, for sustainable forest management
- making the Kyoto Protocol provisions work towards the broader goals of sustainable forest management
- conservation and sustainable utilisation of biological diversity of forests
- action to address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation
- prevention and combating of forest fires and containing their cross-boundary impacts
- concerted action and co-operation to solve the complex problem of airborne pollution at international, regional and sub-regional levels
- co-ordination and streamlining of global forestry research to be better geared towards national needs and priorities
- further dialogue and analysis on options for new international instruments to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the *proposals* at national level

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusions

Implementation of IPF Proposals for Action at National Level

1) The methodology of the six-country exercise, as well as the tools developed for the process (including the Practitioners' Guide), are valuable contributions for other countries to be considered, applied or adapted in devising and carrying out their own assessment processes. Some countries need financial and technical assistance in conducting the assessment process.

2) Adequate time and resources are needed for implementing the *proposals* in the national context. This was considered especially important, given the participatory nature of the assessment process and the need for adequate communication and information.

3) A focal point at the national level would be useful to guide the assessment and implementation process, including linking national work with international initiatives.

4) The relevance of the *proposals* has to be determined at the national level according to national priorities, opportunities and constraints, taking into account international and regional obligations.

5) Grouping of the *proposals* around the issues of national importance could help to focus the national assessment on the underlying issues. This could also facilitate the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation.

6) National forest programmes, as defined by IPF, are seen as a significant vehicle for the implementation of the *proposals* at the national level. These programmes are also considered to have high potential for effective implementation and co-ordination at national level, including liaison with other international forest-related instruments.

Participation in the Process of Implementation and Assessment

7) The IPF process, its report and Proposals for Action are known primarily to the IPF negotiators and a limited number of institutions involved, but there is a general lack of broad participation of relevant policy-makers, practitioners, the private sector (including forest owners), NGOs and community groups. Even the forest-sector participants are mainly from central government agencies. This insufficient awareness is at least partly due to the lack of a coherent communication strategy on the relevance and importance of the IPF process.

8) Participation and awareness building are vital elements of the assessment, integration and internalisation of the *proposals* in the national frameworks, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders understand their contents, significance and implications. There is a worldwide move towards increasing stakeholder participation in the forest sector, reflecting the changing roles of government, private sector and civil society.

9) Those countries with existing fora for consultation, debate and participation are in a better position to contribute to international processes, such as IPF, and to benefit from them. To make these fora more effective requires a systematic effort of information-

sharing and dissemination within a country, especially towards the private and other non-governmental sectors.

Monitoring and Reporting of the Implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action

10) National-level monitoring may cover both the implementation process of the IPF *proposals* and its results. Effective monitoring is participatory and transparent, drawing, as far as possible, on existing mechanisms and procedures. In the short run monitoring focuses on progress in implementation and in the long run on results.

11) Reporting requirements should not be duplicative (e.g. FAO, CBD, CSD, ITTO). Emphasis should be placed on the national level, focusing on key issues and priorities under an appropriate framework such as the national forest programme.

12) Targets (indicators of progress) cannot be derived directly from the *proposals*.

Political Relevance and Strategic and Operational Value of the IPF Proposals for Action

13) IPF, as part of the post-UNCED process, has created significant political support to sustainable forest management as a result of high-level commitments. However, the voluntary nature of the *proposals* and lack of adequate understanding and commitment among key actors at national level so far limits possibilities for implementation and impact, particularly beyond forest constituencies.

14) The short time since the completion of IPF and the lack of an adequate framework for reporting do not allow for a full assessment of the impacts of *proposals*. The initial experience in many countries is, however, positive with promising results in terms of policy development and broadening participation of key stakeholders in implementation.

15) The key areas where impact can be observed are: (i) increased dialogue with stakeholders and increased transparency, (ii) amendment and increased enforcement of forest policy, (iii) harmonisation of forest and forest-related planning and policies, and (iv) enhanced co-ordination. It is, however, difficult to single out the impacts of IPF from those induced by macroeconomic changes and other policy processes.

16) The relevance of the *proposals* is clearly related to existing national priorities but should also be interpreted in a broader way to allow policies themselves to be improved.

17) The value of *proposals* is largely strategic, and can be realised through an adequate legal and policy framework, such as national forest programmes

Coordination at International Level

18) There is a need to further analyse (i) interdependence between *proposals* or their appropriate groupings in order to help countries consider them in national contexts, and (ii) interlinkages with other international instruments, in order to bring together various partial approaches influencing forests, towards more concerted action for sustainable forest management and solving related conflicts.

19) The current international situation is characterised by many legally-binding and other instruments which may not effectively address the forest-related problems at the international level. This calls for a continued follow-up beyond IFF, with a view to secure continued structured policy dialogue at the international level.

Interaction between International and National Levels

20) In many cases country participation in the IPF process was weak and needs strengthening during IFF. Broader participation would be useful both in the preparation of national positions and in IFF national delegations. Expert-level seminars have significantly contributed to capacity building at international level.

21) There has been inadequate feedback from the international to the national level and between national and subnational level, and effective two-way communication should be put in place. Also networks between and among stakeholder groups are useful instruments to arrange these communication flows.

22) The Kyoto Protocol offers significant prospects for addressing current problems in forest financing. However, sustainable forest management goals need consideration in designing their application mechanisms.

2. Recommendations

National Level

1) All countries are encouraged to undertake a systematic assessment of the *proposals* and planning for their implementation in the context of their own national processes aimed at sustainable forest management. This should take into account the experiences of the six-country exercise and adapting these to their specific situations. The Practitioners' Guide should be improved to facilitate assessment exercises.

2) Countries should implement the *proposals* in the context of their national forest programme or similar instruments in a co-ordinated and participatory manner. Measurable targets and indicators should be included to ensure effectiveness of implementation. The policy framework should be kept under review so it continues to embody capabilities for inter-sectoral planning, co-ordination and implementation, and adequate resource allocation, particularly at the sub-national level,.

3) Countries are encouraged to set a focal point to guide and co-ordinate the assessment and implementation process of the *proposals*, including facilitation of participation and liaison with the international level.

4) Mechanisms for stakeholder participation should be improved, building on existing arrangements and applying a step-by-step approach. This should start with awareness-raising on opportunities to participate and on the wide international agenda represented by the *proposals*.

5) Countries are encouraged to develop their own ways of organising adequate monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the *proposals*. This could include their implementation process and results, within the context of monitoring national forest programmes.

International Level

6) The results of international processes, such as IPF/IFF, should be formulated and communicated in a clear and practical manner so as to facilitate their implementation at the national level. To achieve this, adequate participation of persons and institutions involved in the management of the forest sector at national and sub-national levels should be ensured along with key stakeholder groups.

7) The methodology developed in the six-country exercise, including the Practitioners' Guide should be made available to other countries. The Guide should be improved to be used as appropriate in national assessment processes.

8) IFF should consider inviting an independent body to prepare an easy-to-understand popular guide to the IPF report and its *proposals*, in all major languages, for broad-based dissemination.

9) The international community should assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing the *proposals* as needed. National forest programmes should be used as a framework for channelling development assistance for the implementation of the *proposals*. Such support is particularly needed for building up participatory mechanisms and innovative financing instruments.

10) Voluntary reporting to CSD on progress in the implementation of IPF *proposals* should be encouraged by IFF. Based on national experiences and monitoring systems, IFF should develop a common methodology for monitoring and reporting, complementing and strengthening existing reporting systems. Effective feedback from international institutions to countries on key issues should be ensured.

11) In its work programme, IFF should consider the possible implications of the Kyoto Protocol for sustainable forest management.

12) IFF should assess the role and potential of international instruments in supporting national implementation of the *proposals*.